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Marilla Maud's Career

BY

S. S. G. ENTERTAINMENT CO.

Authors of "Union Depot for a Day", Etc.

A Drama In Three Acts, Employing Eighteen People

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Luzetta R. Sanders and Cora A. Sanders

Canton, Illinois, 1918

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S. S. G. ENTERTAINMENT CO. 42 N. AVE. A, CANTON, ILL.

Marilla Maud's Career

A Drama of Three Acts, Employing Eighteen People, But Can Be Staged With Fourteen in Cast.

Act I—The Bassett Kitchen.
Act II—Mrs. Risedorf's Parlor.
Act III—The Bassett Living Room.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

ACT I.

Marilla Maud Bassett
Joseph Bassett, her father.
Hetty Bassett, her mother.
Billy Bassett, her brother.
Grandma Bassett.
Jim Bigelow, Mr. Bassett's help on farm, and Marilla Maud's lover.

ACT II.

Cast for Colonial Play.

Polly Hartwell.
Mrs. Risedorf, Polly's aunt.
Col. Hartwell, in Continental Army, Polly's father.
Tabitha Melrose, Polly's friend.
Capt. Hugh Willoughby, of King George's Army, Polly's lover.
Capt. Robert Blaisdell, of King George's Army, Polly's would be lover.
Lieut. West, of King George's Army, Tabitha's admirer.
Miss Lavina Cartwright, Miss Amelia Cartwright, eccentric friends of Mrs. Risedorf.
Biddy Maloney, Mrs. Risedorf's maid.
Larry McGee, Capt. Willoughby's servant.
Miss Holmes, a teacher in School of Expression.
A British Soldier.

ACT III.

Marilla Maud Bassett.
Joseph Bassett, her father.
Hetty Bassett, her mother.
Jim Bigelow, her old time lover.
Herbert Keene (Capt. Willoughy in play), her lover.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS.

Much of the success of a play depends upon quick action—keeping things moving. Avoid long waits between acts. When the curtain falls between scenes in Act II it is simply to show a lapse of time—that all events do not happen the same day, so curtain should be down but two or three minutes each time.

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Actors should speak slowly, enunciate clearly, and when applause is given should pause in their speeches till it subsides.

Actors should keep well to front of stage, so they can be seen and heard. Do not have stage very deep, in any of acts, as that makes it harder for actors to be understood.

PROPERTIES.

Strap, hammer and rivets (for Billy), table, rolling pin, pan, for flour, apples cut for pie, pie dough, sugar etc., two pie tins, plates, cups, spoons, etc., dishpan in which is water for washing dishes, two or three chairs for kitchen, one small rocker, five chairs for parlor, of colonial style, a jar of cherries, old fashioned up and down churn, in which is milk, two books, papers, magazines, letters, knitting for grandma, candle sticks in which are candles—one a low candle with handle, two high ones such as they used in olden times, mantel, tea table—on which are cups, saucers, sugar bowl, creamer, teapot, plate of little cakes, vase in which is rose—table on which are found quills for writing, paper, etc., whisket (basket), piece of red ribbon, half dozen eggs, skirt, long cloak, bonnet for Biddy, one for Polly, and one each for Misses Lavina and Amelia Cartwright, little shoulder shawl, an arm chair, center table.

ACT I.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

Kitchen table placed diagonally, left front, on which are dishes to be washed and articles for making pie. Churn, center front, chair right front, near window, if possible. Chair right back. Door, center back, to dining room. Outside door at right, near window.

Mrs. Bassett, Marilla Maud and Grandma wear plain morning dresses Curtain rises showing Mrs. Bassett at table making a pie, Grandma Bassett in arm chair, at right front, knitting. Billy, a boy of fourteen, in overalls too short for him, is on floor, whistling, while mending a strap, pounding with hammer.

Mrs. B.—(calling, while rolling pie crust) Marilly Maud! O, Marilly Maud! (After short pause) Where do you s'pose that girl is?

Billy—Out recitin' po'try to the birds, I reckon.

Mrs. B.—Don't say po'try to me, or you'll drive me plum crazy. I don't know what's goin' to become of that girl.

Grandma B.—Tut, tut, Hetty! Don't worry about that girl. She'll come out all right.

Mrs. B.—But, mother, here it is Wednesday already, and the ironing ain't been touched yet, and Marilly Maud knows the churnin' has to be done, and here she's galavantin' off to the woods, or some place, rantin' round like she's crazy. I declare for it, I dunno what to think of that girl.

Grandma B.—Well, well don't stew an' fret. I kin do that churnin' just as well as not. (Puts by knitting and starts to rise.)

Mrs. B.—The very idea! You sit down mother. You're not goin' to do any churnin', when you're that lame, you can scarcely hobble around. Billy'll have to tend to it, or the cream'll spoil.

Billy—Well, I guess not. Churnin' ain't no man's job.

Mrs. B.—Oh. please, son. Just this once. There's no tellin' where Marilly Maud is, nor when she'll be back.

Billy—I'm busy. I'm mendin' this strap. (Pounds again.)

Mrs. B.—That strap can wait, and the churnin' can't.

Billy—(Throwing down strap in disgust). Yes, my work can wait —everything can wait with me, but Marilly Maud can go round yellin' (throwing up arms stiffly) "Curfew shall not ring tonight," any old time. (Starting towards door) I'll go fetch her.

Grandma B —I'm afraid, son, if you do, your mother'll have to send me to fetch you—it'd be like sending' the handle for the ax, you know.

Mrs. B.—Come on Billy, do the churnin' this time, and I'll coax your pa to let you go fishin' next Saturday.

Billy—(coming back slowly) Yes, he'll let me go, won't he? Nit! (Billy begins churning vigorously.)

Mrs. B.—Wait a minute, wait a minute, Billy. (hurriedly takes off her apron) Put this apron on, or you'll splash up your clean overalls.

Billy—(pushing her away) Oh, go 'long! I don't want no apron.

Mrs. B.—But you must, Billy. See, you're splashin' 'em a'ready, and you ain't got no other clean ones to put on.

Billy—(reluctantly yields, and churns vigorously for a minute) Ain't it time to pour cold water in here, mom? I believe the butter's comin'.

Mrs. B.—Mercy sakes, child! You've just begun.

Grandma B.—If you go a leetle slower, and leetle steadier, Billy, you'll come out ahead, not only with the butter, but with every thing else you take hold on. You know the old sayin', "The more haste the less speed"

Billy—I wish I could get hold of Marilly Maud.

Marilly Maud—(who enters from right, in time to hear her name) What does my little brother want? (looking at Billy, who has a frown on face) What, not mad, is he? Nothing wrong between you and Susie, I hope. (begins singing) "Can she bake a cherry pie, Billy boy, Billy boy—"

Billy—(interrupting) Oh, shut up. Come over here and take hold of this churn, and get busy.

Marilly Maud—(turning to mother) Oh, mother, I completely forgot about the churning. I'm so sorry, but I'll put my book away and be back in just a minute. (exit Marilly Maud, center back.)

Billy—Yes, I've got a picture of her gettin' back in a minute!

Grandma B.—Who's your photy-grapher, Billy? I'm afeared you got up wrong end foremost, this morning, my son.

Marilly Maud—(who hears Billy's speech, puts head in door) What's that, Billy, dear? Never mind! I'll try to get Susie to make up with her Billy boy.

Billy—Oh, ring off! (Leaves churning and picks up strap.)

Mrs. B.—Don't leave that churning till Marilly Maud gets back, or all your work will be for nothing. (Billy throws down strap and goes to churning again.)

Mr. B.—(as he enters from right) Is Billy here, Hetty? (seeing Billy) Oh, I see you've put him to work That's all right.

Billy—(grumbling) 'Tain't all right, not by a long shot. Nothin' right about it.

Mr. B.—It ain't nigh so much fun, son, as pumpin' wind into that old bicycle, but there's a heap more to show for your work.

Billy—You can get somewhere on a bicycle

Mrs. B.—You need Billy, don't you Joe? I'll send him out, as soon as Marilly Maud comes.

Billy—You needn't count on me, pop, for you know what waitin' on Marilly Maud means. (Marilly Maud's voice heard quoting poetry) There she is, throwin' a fit now.

Mrs. B.—(sighing) I declare for it, if she ain't. What ever are we goin' to do with that girl? Ever since the new teacher came and put it into her head that she can say pieces, she ain't been worth shucks. She just goes moonin' 'round, gettin' off that trash, from morning till night. Elocutin! I'm sick and tired of it.

Billy—Well, if there's any thing cute about it, I don't see where it comes in.

Mr. B.—(shaking head) I'm up a stump. I don't know what to do. She'd better let that curfew ring a spell, while she does a little wringin' on the clothes, or makes up a batch of bread. (Exit Mrs. B. left with pie.)

Billy—She's got bats in her belfry, that's what the matter with her.

Grandma B.—She's got what, Billy? You shouldn't ought to talk that way about your sister—the only one you've got.

Billy—One's enough, such as it is. Why don't she come and see to this churnin', if she's so fine?

Mrs. B.—(as she re-enters, and begins washing dishes) I wish I knew what to do. I'm at my wits' end. I'd think Jim'd lose all patience with her. If she keeps on this way, she'll never make no man a good wife.

Billy—You needn't worry about Jim. She's got him hypnotized all right. (laughing heartily, slapping hand on thigh) Wish you could've seen him the other day. I come on him out in the woods, an' he was shoutin' at the top of his voice, "Friends, Romans, Countrymen!" Lend me your ears!" (All laugh.)

Grandma B.—But Hetty, you know when she spoke that piece the other night at the Grange—"Over the Hills to the Poorhouse"—there wasn't a dry eye in the hall. I thought it was real purty.

Mr. B.—Purty enough, mother, but what good'll it ever do her. Purty speakin' won't make her a good house keeper. I never thought a girl of mine would turn out that way. How soon can you spare Billy, Hetty?

Mrs. B —Well, you see how it is — you can't place no reliance on Marilly Maud. (goes to door, center back, and calls) Marilly Maud, oh, Marilly Maud.

Marilly Maud—(outside) Yes, mother, I'm coming.

Billy—So's Christmas.

Marilly Maud—(enters and goes to churn) I'll take it now, Billy.

Billy—Yes, after the butter has got here.

Marilly M.—(lifting lid and looking) No such good luck, Billy.

Mr. B.—Ready, Billy?

Billy—Yep, when I get this old apron off. (jerks at apron) Confound it! It's in a hard knot.

Mrs. B.—Don't break the strings, Billy. Let me untie it. (Starts towards him, but Billy turns it around to front, unties it, and throws it on floor.)

Mr. B.—(as he and Billy go towards door) Now, Marilly Maud, do help your mother out today. She has so much to do.

Marilly M.—Surely I will, father.

Mr. B.—Now don't forget.

Marilly M.—Why, of course, not. (Exit Mr. B. and Billy, at right.)

Mrs. B.—You don't know what he means, do you, Marilly Maud?

Marilly M.—Now, mother, you know I do mean to be helpful (For a few seconds the dash of churn, and Mrs. B. washing dishes is all that is heard. Grandma B. nods over knitting.)

Marilly M.—(dropping churn dasher suddenly, she waves her hands and shouts) "Out, far out—"

Grandma B.—(Mrs. B. drops a plate she is wiping and breaks it. Grandma starts up, looks around wildly) Mercy sakes! That heifer out again? I told Joe he'd better put up a barbed wire fence.

Mrs. B —There you go again! See what you made me do. Only had nine plates and at this rate, we soon won't have enough to go round.

Marilly M.—(very meekly) I believe the butter is here.

Mrs. B.—Then you finish the dishes, and I'll take it out to the spring house. Now watch that pie I put in the oven. Don't forget it, what ever you do. (Exit Mrs. B., at left, with churn. Marilly M. washes dishes and Grandma B. sleeps.)

Marilly M.—(holding up rolling pin in threatening attitude and in deep tones recites) "At the ringing of the curfew, Basil Underwood must die."

Grandma B.—(starting up) Did you say Jimmie Wood is goin' to die? Well, he'll be better off, and so'll Mandy.

Marilly M.—Oh. I was just practicing. I wasn't saying anything to you.

(Grandma soon dozes again, and Marilly M. continues washing dishes slowly looking up and not at her work.)

Marilly M.—I can't seem to get the idea how that other piece ought to be done. (She takes a towel, wipes a dish slowly, and never looking, puts it in a pan of flour.) Let me see. (stepping out as if to front of stage) How would she do that? Would she look up (glancing up, she does not see Billy, who enters from right, says in aside ("At it again!") mimics her) I do wonder whether she would look up, or would she look down at **him**, as she says "Swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon" —I believe she'd look up—"That monthly changes in its encircling orb; lest thy love likewise prove variable." Then Romeo says, "What **shall** I swear by?" "Swear not at all, or if thou **must**, swear by thy gracious self."

Grandma B.—(rousing up) Uh, What say? I must have dropped off a second. (sniffing) Seems to me, I smell something burning.

Marilly M.—Oh, grandma, that pie! (She rushes out at left and returns with pie, burned black. She puts it on table, goes to grandma, throws herself on her knees, buries her head in grandma's lap, and sobs) Oh. grandma, grandma, what shall I do? What will mother say? It's no use, it's no use. I'm no good at all. I can't keep my mind on my work. If father and mother would only let me go to school, I'd show them that I **could** do something.

Grandma B.—(who has been stroking Marilly Maud's hair) Have patience honey, maybe they will let you go bye and bye.

Marilly Maud—(smiling through her tears, says in a whimsical way)

"Patience is a virtue, possess it if you can.
It is seldom found in woman, and is **never** found in man."

But Grandma, that pie! Poor mother! I can never face her.

Grandma B.—Well, honey, if you've got a hard thing to do, do it, and get it over with, was always my motto. Come on, I'll go with you. (Marilly M. gives her grandma her arm and they start) Better fetch the pie along and show her just how bad it is. Mebbe we can save some out of the middle.

Marilly M.—(holds out pie looking at it ruefully) There is no middle—there is no edge—it's just a burnt, black pie. Even the chickens will not eat it. Oh, dear!

Grandma B.—There, there, honey, never mind, fetch it along. (Exit both at left) (Enter Jim Bigelow from right with book in hand, looks around sheepishly, takes look in book, which he puts on table.)

Jim B.—(in loud voice) "Friends, Romans, Countrymen, lend me your ears! Lend me your ears! ! Lend me your ears! !" Oh, gee! when I get the gestures I forget the words, and when I know the words, I forget the gestures. I'd rather walk behind the plow all day, and all night too, for that matter, but this is my only chance. If I get this, mebbe I can get her to look at me. (sighing) Well, here goes. I'll tackle it again. (mops brow with red bandana, runs hands through hair frantically, squares himself and begins) Friends, Romans, Countrymen lend me your ears! (studies awhile and breaks out) Lend me your ears! ! Lend me your ears! ! ! Doggone it! What comes next? (Scratches head and thinks.)

(Billy comes to door at right, peeps in watching Jim for a time, laughing with hand over mouth.)

Billy—(in an aside) Golly! He's got the germ, sure enough.

(Jim hears sound, hurriedly hides book in jumper pocket, and slips out of door at left.)

Billy—(comes to door again with mail and calls) Sis! I say Sis! Got something for you.

Marilly Maud—(entering from center back) Oh, the mail! Did I get a letter?

Billy—(holding letter so she cannot get it goes to center front) It's from New York. (Marilly M. tries to grab it) Don't be in a hurry. Keep cool Marilly Maud. (puts letter in his pocket) It'll keep. No rush. (they scuffle) She can make a cherry pie, can she?

Marilly M.—Oh, now Billy, please give it to me. (to mother who enters from left) Mother make Billy give me my letter.

Mrs. B.—What's the matter? You children fussing again? It does seem to me when there's only the two of you, you might get along better.

Marilly M.—But, mother, he has a letter for me, and won't give it up.

Mrs. B.—Billy, give the letter to your sister. Don't tease that way.

Billy—(holding it out) Well, here it is, Sis, come and get it. (Marilly M. reaches for letter, but Billy snatches it away again) Not so fast sister mine. Age before beauty, you know. I will now proceed to distribute the mail.)

Marilly M.—Billy Bassett, you're the meanest boy I ever knew. (Flops herself in chair at right back and looks away.)

Billy—(slowly and deliberately looks over mail) Here's the "Drover's Journal." That's for pop. (puts paper on table) Here's how to raise your chickens, ma, and grandma, here's your "Home Friend." (Grandma B. had come in during the talk from left) (To Jim, who comes in at this time from right) Here, Jim's your "Country Gentleman." But what's that in your pocket? (grabs book from Jim's pocket, looks at title and reads) "The Art of Public Speaking". (Jim takes book from Billy and rushes out at right.)

Marilly Maud—Please, Billy, give me my letter.

Billy—Why, yes, there was a letter—that's so. (takes it from pocket) Let's see who it's from. (starts as if to tear it open, but Marilly M. snatches it from his hand and rushes off center back.)

Bil'y—(calling after her) How about that pie, Sis?

Grandma B.—Now, Billy, your sister didn't mean to burn that pie.

Mrs. B.—(who continues dishwashing) No, mother, she didn't mean to burn the pie. She doesn't mean to do any thing wrong, but she's always doing it. Now we'll have to open some fruit. (calling) Marilly Maud, go get me a jar of cherries.

Grandma B.—I don't know, Hetty, but what the child is right. It's purty hard to have your hull heart set on one thing, and try to do another. The child ought to have a chance. She ought to have a chance.

(Enter Marilly M. with letter in one hand, and a bar of soap in the other.)

Mrs. B.—What's that soap for?

Marilly M.—Didn't you tell me to get you a bar of soap?

Mrs. B.—(drawing a long sigh, and shaking head) Marilly Maud, who's your letter from?

Marilly M.—It's from Miss Brooks, mother, and—

Mrs. B.—(interrupting) What she got to say? Putting more notions into your head, is she?

Marilly M.—She's very anxious for me to come to Boston. She says there's a great opportunity for me now. I could earn part of my tuition by teaching and I can live with her, so it would cost us very little. Oh. how I wish I could go.

Mrs. B.—I wish that Miss Brooks would let you alone. Boston! Might as well talk of goin' to the moon. (Exit Mrs. B. at left.)

Marilly M.—(looks at letter) If I only could. Oh, how I would work.

Grandma B.—Mebbe you can go, child, mebbe you can. As the old sayin' is, "Where there's a will, there's a way". (Mrs. B, passes through room with a jar of cherries, and Grandma B. hobbles after her, saying as she goes) Let me sweeten my cherries, Hetty. You always get 'em too sweet. (Both exit center back.) (Enter Jim B., from right, who sees Marilly Maud—who has dropped into her grandma's chair, and has leaned her head on hand—and goes hesitatingly to her side.)

Jim B.—(bashfully) Marilly Maud!

Marilly M.—(looking up quickly) Oh, it's you, Jim.

Jim B.—What's the matter? Is there any thing I can do?

Marilly M.—The same old trouble, Jim. I've just had another letter from Miss Brooks. She has such a fine plan, and wants me to come to Boston. But I'm afraid it is impossible.

Jim B.—Marilly Maud—I— that is—you wouldn't—I mean—let me give you the money. I've got quite a bit laid by.

Marilly M.—Oh, no, Jim! You are very kind, but I couldn't think of taking your money.

Jim B.—Why not? I don't need it. You can just borrow it, if you'd rather.

Marilly M.—(putting out hand as if warding him off) Don't, Jim. You're too good to me. I am not worthy after—after—oh, I wish I could love you as you deserve.

Jim B.—There, there, dear heart. We'll say no more about that. All I want, is to see you happy.

Marilly M.—And I want you to be happy, Jim. I know of no one who so richly deserves happiness—But I want so to try my wings.

Jim B.—And if the bird should sometime tire of its flight?

Marilly M.—I wish I could say it, Jim, but I don't know. Surely you will find some other girl—

Jim B.—(interrupting) There's only one girl in the world for me.

(Enter Mr. B. and Billy from the door at right, as Mrs. B. comes from dining room, center back.)

Mrs. B.—Dinner is on the table. (All start for dining room but M. M.)

Mr. B.—Come on, Marilly Maud.

Marilly M.—I don't want any dinner, daddy.

Mr. B.—What! No dinner! Are you sick, daughter? (Goes to Marilla Maud's side. Jim steps to right back, near Billy.)

Mrs. B.—(at left center) No, she ain't sick, but she's had another one of them letters from that Miss Brooks, and it's all upset her.

Mr. B.—(as grandma enters from center back) Too bad, Marilly Maud: wish we could send you, seein's your heart's so set on it. But I don't see how we can afford it.

Grandma B.—(goes to center near Mr. B.) It's such a good chance for her, Joe. She can stay with Miss Brooks and they'll board themselves, and she can earn part of her schoolin' by teachin'. Seems as if we ought to manage it some way, son.

Mr. B.—If you did get this schoolin', daughter—which I don't noways approve of—what use could you make of it? Like enough, you'd be like the young feller grandma tells about. His father sent him to college. an' give him a big education. When he come home, and his father asked him what profession he'd choose, he said he believed he'd like to drive a stage

Marilly M.—(rises and puts hand on father's arm) Oh, if you'll just give me a chance, I'll show you. I could command a good position, and would do so much for you all.

Billy—(slapping Jim on back) Whoopee! Jim. I see a new bicycle in it for Billy, and a seven passenger car for the Bassett family.

Mr. B.—What better position do you want, than to be the wife of a good man, and the mistress of your own home?

Marilly M.—But, daddy, I don't want to marry. I want to be independent.

Mrs B.—Independent! Fiddlesticks!

Mr. B. Well, Marilly Maud, you don't seem to be doin' any good here. There ain't no use tryin' to put a square peg in a round hole. Come on to dinner and we'll talk it over—mebbe we can figger it out.

Marilly M.—(claps hands together) Oh, daddy! (throwing arms arcund grandma's neck) Grannie, I'm the happiest girl in all the world.

Billy—(imitating M. M.) Oh, Daddy! Oh, Grannie! I'm the hungriest kid in all the world. Come on to dinner.

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

Costumes for Act II.

Study pictures in American histories and novels of colonial times. Search your town for old style wearing apparel. Three costumes for

British soldiers are needed, and one for an American soldier. Men should wear white wigs, which may be made by using close fitting caps of white cloth, and covering them with cotton batting. Let a narrow piece hang down back, cut in three strips, braid, and tie with ribbon.

Coats for British soldiers should be of red, with facing, cuffs and pockets of another color. The tails of coats reach nearly to knees, where knee breeches and stockings meet. Breeches and doublet—a long vest—should be of a different color from coat. The coat is cut away in front to show doublet. Slippers with large buckles are worn. When calling, soldiers should wear high neck stocks, ruffles down front of shirts, and in sleeves. They may wear swords.

Col. Hartwell's costume may be of same cut as the British, but should preferably be of blue with facings, cuffs and pockets of contrasting color. When he comes to see Polly the second time, he should wear cocked, three cornered hat, which he removes as he enters. He should have a gun with very long stock. If it can be found, a powder horn fastened to a broad strap, diagonally across the breast, will be effective.

By looking at pictures, and using a man's frock coat, a pattern can be cut. Costumes may be made of dress lining.

The girls may wear tight fitting waists with points in front, necks cut rather low, elbow sleeves with ruffles of very wide lace. Skirts plain, with panniers rather long—not the pannier of the Dolly Varden style. The hair should be dressed very high, and may be a la pompadour. A large back comb may be placed in coil of hair on top of the head.

It is summer time, so wraps, if any, must be light. When Polly returns from sending letter, she wears a broad brimmed, inverted basket kind of bonnet, tied with broad ribbons, or wide lace strings.

Mrs. Risedorf should wear a delicate lace cap. Her dress should have very full skirt, tight fitting waist. An old time, large plaid silk would be fine for her. She may wear a white lace fichu.

The Misses Cartwright should dress in the style of the times, with silk or straw bonnets, with flaring brims (sunbonnet style). One may have curl hanging down each side of face, inside bonnet.

Biddie wears a full plain skirt, tight fitting waist, and white apron. Her cap may be a coquettish one of white muslin.

Larry may wear knee breeches, a dark, plain frock coat, stockings and slippers.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

Scene First is staged in School of Expression, in which Marilla Maud is a pupil.

Stage is laid for colonial play, given at close of school year.

Scene is laid in Mrs. Risedorf's parlor. If possible, have a colonial mantel piece. As they were very plain, one could be made and painted white. On mantel have a pair of old fashioned gold and white china vases, and a pair of tall candle sticks in which are candles. Tea table at left front, on which are tea things. Table at right front, on which are quills, paper, etc. A chair is near table, and one is placed by tea table. Call bell on tea table. Mantel in center back, with a chair on either side. Two chairs at left. Furniture as near colonial style as possible (hair cloth).

When curtain rises part of actors are on stage, waiting anxiously for Polly and Tibbie Mrs. R. seated at left front, West and Biddy seated at left, Amelia stands looking out of window, and Capt. W. stands by mantel at center back, with elbow on mantel, and head on hand.

SECOND ACT. A YEAR LATER.

Scene 1.

Mrs. R.—(rises from chair at left front and nervously paces floor) For pity's sake! Where can those girls be.

Biddy—(rises hurriedly from chair at left, and starts to left back)

Well I'm going to see if I can't find them. I can't stand it any longer.

Mrs. R.—(grabbing hold of Biddy) Don't you dare do such a thing. We'd have to be sending for you.

Capt. W.—(who stands by mantel, center back, elbow on mantel, head on hand) Without Polly, it'll be the play of Hamlet, with Hamlet left out.

Mrs. R.—(still pacing floor) Now don't get funny. It's nothing to joke about. (goes to door) I believe they're coming now.

Biddy—Thank goodness! (All look relieved and expectant.)

(Enter Tibbie all out of breath, and sinks into a chair which Willoughby places for her near center.)

All in Chorus—Where's Polly? What's the matter? What's wrong?

Tibbie—Polly—has—been—run—down—by—an—auto.

West—No! !

Mrs. R.—How dreadful!

Capt. W.—Impossible!

Biddy—Was she much hurt?

Tibbie—They don't know yet—she was unconscious, and they took her to the hospital.

Mrs. R—Whatever shall we do?

Amelia—And all those tickets sold!

Capt. W. That puts a quietus on the play, for certain.

Tibbie—No, it doesn't. Marilla Bassett is going to take Polly's part.

Mrs. R.—(contemptuously) Marilla Bassett! Well, I'll not act with her—that's settled.

Biddy—What does she know about this play?

Amelia—She's never done any acting in public.

West—She won't know the lines, and we'll all be in the soup.

Tibbie—She does know the lines. She's drilled me night after night, and has learned all the parts. Miss Holmes has tried her out, and she is satisfied.

Mrs. R.—I don't care! I won't take part. I'm not going to be made ridiculous!

Tibbie—(rises) Look here, Meg Hawthorne, there's no use in you acting that way. You're jealous—that's what's the matter with you.

Mrs. R.—Jealous! Why should I be jealous of that green, country girl.

Tibbie—You'll learn yet, Miss Hawthorne, that there's some talent outside of Boston. You never have treated Marilla decent, since she came here.

Capt. W.—There, there, girls, let's bury the hatchet. You will take your part, Meg, you won't spoil the play.

Mrs. R.—Well, I suppose I'll have to.

West—That's the idea. If Miss Holmes is satisfied, we ought to be.

Tibbie—Good for you, Johnnie. Marilla can do it, and you'll see. We'll all be proud of her.

Miss Holmes—(who enters with Marilla from right and goes to center) Will you please give me your attention for a few minutes? You have been told of Miss Carter's accident, and that Miss Bassett has consented to take her place in the play, as Polly. I wish to bespeak for her your aid and sympathy, as she is put in a very trying position. We greatly appreciate her willingness to undertake the part, and I am confident she will be a credit to the school.

Marilla—Thank you, Miss Holmes. You are very kind, and I'll do my best.

Capt. W.—(offering his hand) I have no fears for Polly the Second.

Miss Holmes—Now, young people remember! Keep your faces to the audience, speak slowly—forget yourselves! (looks around and discovers audience) Why! the audience is gathering. Draw the curtain.

Curtain rises in two or three minutes.

Scene 2. Mrs. Risedorf's Parlor.

Polly—(stands at left front reading a letter from home). The wretches! How dare they?

Mrs. R.—(entering from right) What ails thee, Polly? Hast bad news? Prithee tell me.

Polly—Those nasty, horrid British!

Mrs. R —Tut, tut, child! Hast forgotten Capt. Willoughby?

Polly—Capt. Willoughby—

Mrs. R.—(interrupting) But what is thy news, child. Tell it me.

Polly—Betty writes that British troops are encamped right in our front yard. That they help themselves from our cellar and store room, and have stolen our horses from the stable.

Mrs. R —We wot not what to expect. (seats herself at right center) Naught need surprise us these a-days.

Polly—(walks back and forth) I fear me for aunt Patience and Betty. They are all alone since father is with the army. Fancy, how frightened they will be! There's no telling what will happen to them.

Mrs. R.—Do not wherret thyself, child. His Majesty's soldiers would not harm unprotected females.

(Enter Biddy from left back, followed by Polly's father, Col. Hartwell.) (Exit Biddy to right.)

Polly—(runs towards father) Father! where didst thou come from?

Hartwell—(holding Polly at arm's length) Polly, my lass, thou art a sight for sore eyes! (shaking hands with Mrs. R.) How now, Kate, my girl? Blooming as ever, as I live.

Mrs. R.—Thou wert ever a flatterer, John.

Polly—(takes hold of father's arm) Dear, old dad, I'm monstrous glad to see thee,. How didst thou get here?

Hartwell—I am sent here on an important mission by His Excellency, and could not pass without getting a glimpse of ye.

Polly—(as Tibbie enters from right) Here is Tibbie. Father, let me puff off my friend. This is Miss Tabitha Melrose.

Hartwell—(bowing low and extending hand) Mistress Tabitha, right pleasured I am to meet ye.

Mrs. R.—Be seated, John. (Hart seats himself at left. Polly at left front. Tibbie brings chair from back and sits near Mrs R.)

Polly—Oh, father, I had a letter from Betty this morning.

Hartwell—Let's have the bowels of it, my lass.

Polly—Ill news enough. The British soldiers are encamped in our front yard. They are robbing our store house and cellar, and stealing our horses.

Tibbie—The horrid things!

Hartwell—Belza take them for a pack of ruffians and thieves! May my bacon and sides choke them!

Polly—Aunt Patience and Betty will be frightened to death. Can't I go to them. They need me.

Hartwell—Nay, nay, my lass Bide where thou art. 'Tis not meet for thee to travel in these troublous times. Poor wenches! How affrighted they must be. They are safe enough as long as officers are quartered there. God knows I fear for them more when they are left to the mercy of the stragglers. But, 'tis but the fortunes of war. Do not wherret, my lass. I will keep my eye upon them.

Polly—Thou are a great comfort, father.

Hartwell—Well, Mistress Tabitha, thy bright eyes will play havoc with the soldier lads.

Tibbie—Let them keep their distance then.

Hartwell—(laughing) Thou saucy lass. I wot, the young blades are all agog. But hark ye, my lasses, lose not thy hearts to these dashing tories. Save them for honest patriot lads, rebels though they be

called. But I must not bide here clacking. I must be off. (All rise.) (holding Polly's hands) God keep thee, lass. Fare thee well, Kate, and Mistress Tabitha. (Exit Hartwell at left back.)

(Tibbie and Polly seat themselves at left.)

Tibbie—Eh, Polly, what think thee thy father will say about Capt. Willoughby?

Polly—Oh, Tibbie, I know he will be sore displeasured. If he could only know him, he would not blame me, I am sure.

Mrs. R.—Capt. Willoughby is of noble family, and an honorable gentleman. I will vouch for him to thy father, child, so give thyself no fear. (as Biddy ushers in Miss Lavina Cartwright) Come right in Lavina.

La.—Art thou well, Mistress Risedorf? And here are the young maids, too. (Polly and Tibbie rise.)

Polly—How art thou, Miss Lavina?

Tibbie—Good afternoon.

Mrs. R.—Sit thee down, and take off thy coverings, Lavina.

(All sit. Lavina near Mrs. R)

La.—Nay, I cannot bide long. The afternoon is so beauteous. I could not resist the temptation to walk abroad.

Mrs. R.—Thou art brave. Didst not fear, being a lone, unprotected female?

La —Nay, that I did not. The only pedestrians to be observed were English soldiers—dashing and boisterous—but one look from me was enough.

Tibbie—(aside) One look at her was enough.

Mrs. R.—How is Amelia these a-days?

La.—Her idiosyncracies and eccentricities are as exasperating as ever. What think ye is her latest whimsey? Thou wouldst never believe it, Katherine.

Mrs. R.—Tell me. What can it be?

La.—(with many gestures) I tell thee, she had for a pet, an old hen—a common, ordinary hen. (All laugh.)

Mrs. R.—A hen! How mighty wonderful!

La.—Well, thou mayst say so. (draws near to Mrs. R. and shakes finger as she talks) And I have not bubbled to thee all. She had her pet in a cage and domiciled it in the dining room. I was dancing mad.

Polly—(as all laugh) didst have the pet with thy house plants in the bow window?

La —Well thou mayst laugh, but it was no laughing matter to me. I tried to shame Amelia. I said, said I, I am mortified to death, that thou, a Cartwright, should have for thy pet a plebeian barnyard fowl. Where is thy family pride? If thou wouldst have a parrot now, I doubt not, Capt. Montgomery would bring thee one on his next voyage.

Mrs. R.—And she wouldn't have the parrot?

La—Nay, she was adamant. I was in despair and consternation, till I bethought me to communicate with brother Pelatiah, at Trenton. He came and hatched up a plan.

Polly—Aye, it would be hatching, when it was all along of a hen. What was the plan?

La—Pelatiah said to sister, said he, "That is too valuable a bird for thee to keep. I know a chicken fancier who would give thee two pounds, seven and four for the fowl." Amelia was pleasured at that, for she loveth to drive a sharp bargain. I will whisper to thee, but thee must not breathe it—Pelatiah paid the two pound, seven and four himself, and we were saved.

Tibbie—'Tis a most thrilling tale.

Polly—Thou mightst say, a tale of a chicken.

Mrs. R—Thou wast good fortuned in getting rid of the trouble. (Enter Biddy followed by Miss Amelia Cartwright, left back.) (Exit Biddy.)

Amelia—(To Lavina) I thought I'd find thee here. But why didst thou cease when I entered? Thou wert clacking of me, I'll be

bound.

Mrs. R—Thou wouldst not have us so forget our manners, as to go on with our conversation, and not pause to greet thee. Sit thee down, and take off thy bonnet. (Polly gets chair from left of mantel and brings it to center.)

Amelia—(As she seats herself) Nay, I will bide with it on. As I passed the large and elegant house that belongeth to Mr. Van Ness, there were gay doings—goings and comings—It did but remind me of one evening last summer, when we were passing. A gay company was on the portico. I remarked to Lavina, "Sister dost not this house remind thee of brother Pelariah's barn in Trenton?" She saw the resemblance, didst thou not, Lavina?

La—That I did, sister. But (to Mrs. R.) we have not told thee of our great good fortune.

Mrs. R—In truth thou hast not. Bubble it to us quickly.

La—We were invited to be spectators at the ball given by the British officers. Mistress Ludlow had some soldiers quartered at her house, and they gave us tickets. 'Twas the grandest sight—so thrilling. Two thirds of those present were British soldiers.

Amelia—More than three thirds of them were British soldiers, sister.

La—Methinks, I could have watched them all night. Princely gallants leading ladies fair, through the mazes of the dance, like this (Rises and does the minuet.)

Amelia—Thou are dazzled, Lavina, like a silly maid at her first party. On such occasions, I always feel in a meditative mood.

La—(Rising) Come sister, 'tis high time we were wending our way homeward. (To Mrs. R.) There is a man in our street, who dispenses milk, and I wish to signal him.

Amelia—Thou hast made a longer visit than I, but I will go with thee. Good by to thee Katherine, Polly and Miss Tabitha.

La—I bid you all adieu. (Exit Lavina and Amelia.)

Biddy—(Enters followed by Capt. Willoughby and Lieut. West) Sure it's Capt. Willoughby and Lieut. West.

Capt. W—(Shaking hands) My greetings, Mistress Risedorf.

West—(Shaking hands) Art well, Mistress Risedorf? (To Polly) And thou Miss Polly (Going to Tibbie) Miss Tabitha, I greet thee. (Stands by Tibbie, at left, and they talk together.)

Capt. W—(Goes to left front. Takes Polly's hand and holds it) I did but count the hours till I would see thee again.

Polly—Canst tell just how many? I'll be bound, thou canst not.

Capt. W—(Triumphantly) 'Tis just six and thirty hours, and one half more. A forfeit shalt thou pay. Mistress Risedorf, shall not Miss Polly pay a forfeit?

Mrs. R—Aye, for Polly is ever fairsome in her dealings. But ring for the tea, Polly.

Polly—(After ringing) What wilt thou have as a forfeit? (Goes to mantel and takes rose from vase) Here, take this rose.

Capt. W—Nay, that is not thine own. I will claim my forfeit when—well, when opportunity offers.

Polly—May it be long delayed.

Capt. W—Sayst thou so? Then will I claim it with interest. (Enter Biddy with tea and cakes, which she places on table where are cups, sugar, etc. Mrs. R. pours tea. West passes a cup to Tibbie, who accepts it, and seats herself at left, Willoughby hands cup to Polly)

Capt. W—Have a dish of tea?

Polly—(Seats herself by Tibbie) I thank thee, no, I wish it not.

Capt. W—What! No tea?

Mrs. R—Polly is such a little rebel, she will have none of the tea. Fie on thee, child! Drink it this time, when the Captain offers it.

Polly—Nay aunt, wouldst have me do despite to my feelings and convictions?

Mrs. R—Thy convictions and feelings will change fast enough when His Majesty's troops have put down this rebellion.

Capt. W—A truce on the tea, till then, Madam. (All but Polly drink tea). (Turning to West) Charlie hast lost thy head entirely? We must not forget our errand. Madam, I crave the honor of escorting thee and Miss Polly to a dance tomorrow eve. 'Twill doubtless be our last and thou canst not say nay. (West puts his and Tibbie's cups on table).

West—Miss Tabitha, I fain would be thy escort. (Capt. W. puts his cup on table).

Tibbie—'Twould pleasure me greatly to go. What sayst thou, Mistress Risedorf?

Mrs. R—I shall be fair pleased to go. Aye, we will all go for we must not miss the farewell dance.

Polly—'Twill be monstrously enjoyable.

Capt. W—Right proud am I to hear thee say so. We will be the envy of all the knights and gallants.

West—But, Willoughby, 'tis time we were departing. (The ladies rise). (Enter Biddie ushering in Capt. Blaisdell, who enters and advances from left back).

Biddy—Captain Blaisdell. (Exit Biddy).

Blaisdell—A fine day, Mistress Risedorf. (Trying to shake hands with Polly) Thou art as fair as ever, Miss Polly. (Willoughby gives him an unfriendly look).

Polly—Didst expect dark looks? I would not disappoint thee.

Blais—Ha, ha! Miss Polly, thou dost take a man up quick. How art thou Miss Tabitha? And here's West and Willoughby. Eh, Willoughby, we are in the lists. Perchance, I can make as fair a showing as thou.

Capt. W—In sooth thou canst, and better, for Belza himself doth ever pose as an angel of light.

West—Come on, Willoughby, we must not tarry. I bid thee adieu, Miss Tabitha.

Capt. W—Fare thee well, Miss Polly. (Bends low and kisses her hand). (Both shake hands with Mrs. R. Exit Will and West, left back. Exit Mrs. R, right).

Blais—(As Polly walks to right Blaisdell follows) I could not resist the temptation to look again into thy bright eyes.

Polly—They do not brighten at sight of thee.

Blais.—Ho, ho, Miss Polly. Thou art coy at first, like all the maids. Thou cravest ardent wooing.

Polly—Nay, nay, I like not thy wooing. Thou canst spare thyself the trouble.

Blais—Be it so. I will bide my time. But surely thou canst not refuse to let me take thee and thy aunt to the last dance, tomorrow eve.

Polly—I thank thee, but my aunt has already accepted an invitation.

Blais—From Willoughby?

Polly—Thou hast no right to ask.

Blais—I doubt not it is. I will go now, but I do not despair. (Exit B.)

Polly—(As Biddy enters and goes to Polly with mysterious air) What is it Biddy? Hast some news?

Biddy—An' sure Miss Polly, it is Larry himself who is outside, and he says he will have spache with none but yourself.

Polly—By thy looks, I wouldst say he has already had speech with some one else. But pray, who is Larry?

Biddy—An' wouldn't ye be after knowin' who Larry McGee is, Miss Polly? Sure he's Capt. Willoughby's mon, he is.

Polly—Oh! Bring him right in, Biddy. (Exit Biddy, who soon returns with Larry at whom she casts coquettish glances) Well Larry what is it?

Larry—It's meself Miss, who has a letter for ye. The Capt. says

he to me, says he, Larry me mon, give the letter into Miss Hartwell's hands. Don't be afther trustin' it to any one ilse. An' sure it's meself that'll be doin' that same. (Hands Polly letter) His honor said I was to wait for an answer.

Polly—All right. Thou mayst go with Biddy, who will give thee refreshments whilst thou art waiting. (Exit Larry and Biddy at right. Enter Mrs. R from right.)

Polly—(After reading letter) Aunt Kate, Capt. Willoughby writes that as he and Lieut. West left the house, he was met by his man coming post haste with a letter telling that the evacuation has begun, and he is ordered to leave within two hours. He asks, if he may see me alone to bid me farewell.

Mrs. R—That he shall. I will see that no one disturbs thee. (Seats herself at left front. Polly writes a brief note, then rings for Biddy.)

Polly—(As Biddy enters from right) Send Larry here at once, Biddy. (Exit Biddy.) (Enter Larry.) Here is the answer to the letter Larry. See that it is given to thy master.

Larry—Aye Miss, I will that same. (Exit Larry at right.)

Mrs. R—'Twill be dull and lonely enough with the army gone

Polly—Yes, aunt. (Arranges chairs.) As Capt. Willoughby will be here soon, I will go and smart myself ere he comes. (Exit Polly.)

Mrs. R—Poor lass! 'Tis a hard fate to love a soldier in these troublous times. But I doubt me, if she would have it different. (Enter Tibbie from right.) Tibbie, Capt. Willoughby is ordered to leave in two hours. He has written asking if he may come and make his adieus, and wishes to see Polly alone.

Tibbie—(At center) How monstrous romantic! I shall be no bar to his wooing. I'll not so much as take a peep at him, when he comes, though I'll be dying to. I'm off this minute. (Exit Tibbie at right.)

Mrs. R—(Rings for Biddy who enters) Biddy, no gentleman is to be admitted but Capt. Willoughby. Remember! we are at home to no other gentleman but the Captain.

Biddy—Sure, ma'am, I'll be after rememberin'. (Looks out of window.) Faith an' it's the Captain I see comin' this minute. I'll be after lettin' him in. (Exit Mrs. R at right, as Biddy ushers in Capt. W. at left back.)

Capt. W—I would see Miss Hartwell.

Giddy—Yis sor. I'll call her sor. (Exit Biddy at right. Enter Polly from right.) Willoughby advances toward her, meets her at center and takes both of her hands.)

Capt. W—Miss Hartwell! Polly, I love thee truly. 'Tis like death to leave thee. Thou wilt be in my thoughts day and night.

Polly—I shall miss thee sadly, Capt. Willoughby, and I shall fear for thy safety.

Capt. W—'Tis heavenly to hear thee say so. When this war is over, may I come and claim thee as my wife? I have thy aunt's permission. May I come, my sweet? Dare I hope that thou lovest me?

Polly—(Faintly) Yea, thou mayst. (As Willoughby is about to take Polly in his arms, voices are heard outside. Enter Miss Lavina from left back, followed by Biddy showing signs of great distress.)

Capt. W—(Aside) Zounds, madam! May a plague take the beldame.

La—(Advancing to center) Biddy is getting quite insolent. Trying to keep me out, indeed! I must report her to Mistress Risedorf.

Biddy—(Aside, wringing her hands) Please Miss Polly, she just would be after comin' in.

Polly—I understand, Biddy. Never mind, thou are not to blame. (Exit Biddy.)

La—La! here is one of those dashing soldiers. How monstrous exciting! (Shaking finger at Polly) Have a care my lass.

Polly—My aunt is in the morning room, Miss Lavina. I will take thee to her.

La—Give thyself no inconvenience. I'll find her myself. I don't wish to intrude upon callers and gallants when they are paying their devoirs. (Exit Miss Lavina at right.)

Capt. W.—(again taking Polly's hands) The minutes are flying, and I have not told thee one-tenth of what is in my heart. 'Twill take me all my life to tell thee how much I love thee. Let me hear thee say "I love thee" to cheer me on my way.

Polly—(very faintly) I love thee.

Capt. W.—(putting arm about Polly) My sweetheart! Thou hast made me very happy. Thou wilt hear from me as oft as messages can be sent thee. Wilt send me word to ease my mind that thou art safe?

Polly—I will do my endeavor to let thee hear.

Capt. W.—But I must be off. Wilt give me one kiss? (They embrace.) Good bye, sweetheart.

(CURTAIN)

(Curtain rises again in two minutes)

Scene 3—Two Weeks Later

(Enter Biddy, ushering in Lieut. West and Capt. Blaisdell.)

Biddy—The leddies will be down prisently. Be saited. (Exit Biddy at right.) (Blaisdell seats himself right front; West at left front.)

Blais—I don't envy His Insolence, Capt. Willoughby.

West—Well, you might envy him. And pray why don't you?

Blais.—'Tis he who is ordered to lead the expedition to surprise the rebels at West Point. He's detailed to go tomorrow night, and bad luck to him.

West—Ill wishes go no higher than the ground. They ne'er reach heaven. (Men rise as Tibbie enters.) My humble respects, Miss Tabitha. (Bowing low.)

Blais.—How art thou, Miss Tabitha? I brought this fellow to see thee.

Tibbie—I doubt not he had to be coerced (seats herself at left near West). But 'tis a great surprise. I thought thee in New York.

West—We are off on leave. The rebels are quiet at Morristown. (Enter Polly from right.) How, now, Miss Polly (shakes hands and presses a note in her hand, which she slips into her pocket as she draws out a handkerchief.)

Polly—(turning to Blaisdell) How art thou, Capt. Blaisdell?

Blais.—(as they shake hands) Thy slave, as ever, Miss Polly. (Tibbie and West engage in conversation.)

Polly—I will give thee thy freedom. (Seats herself near Blaisdell.)

Blais—Nay, Miss Polly. I do not want my freedom. Thou seest I do not despair. Canst not be kind?

Polly—Nay, Capt. Blaisdell. 'Tis no use. I appreciate thy devotion, but can not accept it.

West—Time's up, Blaisdell. We must be off (all rise). Good bye, Miss Tabitha. God keep thee. (Kisses her hand.)

Blais.—Miss Polly, canst not give me one word of encouragement, ere I go?

Polly—Nay, I cannot. I can only say good bye.

Blais—Good bye. I have not given thee up yet. (Exit West and Blaisdell.) (Polly takes note from pocket and reads it.)

Tibbie—Ho! A note. Lieut. West brought it, I ween. 'Tis not a far guess as to who is the writer. I flattered myself the lieutenant came to see me.

Polly—In scoth he came to see thee. He did but kill two birds with one stone. This missive was writ three days agone (thinks deeply), but stay, it may not be too late. (Rings for Biddy, who enters and meets

Polly at center.) Biddy, a friend has sent thy mistress some fresh eggs. Listen carefully to thy instructions. Put on thy market cloak, take a whisket, and go to the market house. Thou knowest the old woman's stall to the right—way down to the end?

Biddy—Sure I know. They call her "Auld Mistress Apple Cheek."

Polly—Put this red ribbon on thy whisket, so she can see it. Ask her for the eggs for Mrs. Risedorf—a half dozen—and when she gives them to thee, keep thy whisket under thy cloak, and let no one take it. Bring them here to me, not to the kitchen. Eggs are very precious. Art sure thou dost understand, Biddy?

Biddy—Sure I do, Miss, and I'll bring the eggs to ye, or me name's not Biddy. (Exit Biddy at right.)

Tibbie—(goes to center) I think I have some news of thy Captain that is later than thy letter. I could scarce bide the time to give it thee.

Polly—What news hast thou? Tell it quickly.

Tibbie—As I drew near the parlor, the men were talking, and I heard Capt. Willoughby's name mentioned, so I stood stock still and listened. Capt. Blaisdell said that thy Captain is to lead an expedition against the rebels at West Point, tomorrow night. He also said he did not envy him.

Polly—I pray heaven that no harm may befall him.

Polly—(as Mrs. R. enters from right) Aunt, I have a surprise for thee, when Biddy returns.

Mrs. R.—And pray, what is it? (Seats herself at left front, Tibbie at left.)

Polly—'Twill not be a surprise, if thou art told. Thou must be patient. But here comes Biddy now (enter Biddy from left back). Didst get the whisket of eggs, Biddy?

Biddy—Sure, Miss. Here it is. (Hands Polly basket, which Polly puts on table, right front)

Mrs. R.—(as Biddy goes) 'Tis time for thee to light the candles, Biddy.

Polly—I have a whisket of fresh eggs for thee, Aunt Kate, but I will take one out myself first. (Opens basket, looks carefully, picks up an egg, opens it, and takes out a little paper, which she reads and touches quickly to her lips.) (Mrs. R. and Tibbie both go to table, right front)

Mrs. R.—What does it mean? Explain thyself, child.

Tibbie—In the name of all that's wonderful!

Polly—See! (showing egg which she has broken). Is't not a bright idea? The egg was carefully opened and put together again with its own white. Capt. Willoughby sent them by a boy, who had instructions to break the eggs and crush them under his heel if he were molested.

Mrs. R —What news dost the Captain send? (Mrs. R. and Tibbie again seat themselves.) (Enter Biddie with lighted candle, from which she lights candles on mantel. (Exit Biddy.)

Polly—'Twas very brief. His duties keep him busy. But Tibbie can tell thee some news she heard.

(A sound of tapping on window is heard. All listen. Polly goes to window and peers out) I can see a man. Oh, 'tis father! (calls through window) I will let thee in. (Exit Polly to right, who soon returns clinging to her father's hand) This is a glad surprise.

Hartwell—(shaking hands) My greetings, Kate, and 'tis Miss Tabitha. I greet thee, my lass.

Mrs. R.—Dost bring any news?

Hartwell—All's quiet at Morristown, and in New York both armies are resting.

Tab.—(rising) I will say goodnight, Col. Hartwell, for thou must have much thou wouldst talk about to Polly.

Hart.—Yea, lass, and thou must get thy beauty sleep. Good night (they shake hands. Exit Tab. at right). Polly, what's this I hear of thee giving thy heart to a Tory Captain. Tell me, 'tis not true. (Both stand center front.)

Polly—Yes, father, 'tis true. But couldst thou know Capt. Willoughby, thou wouldst be satisfied.

Hart.—(turning to Mrs. R.) Gadsbodikins! That thou shouldst pretermit this under thy roof, Kate. Methought I could trust my lass with thee.

Mrs. R.—Why should I not pretermit it, John? Capt. Willoughby is a good match for her. He is a true, upright gentleman, of a noble English family, with fortune and estate. I have made sure of this. Then, he has been most honorable, for he asked my permission to address her, and I would not say him nay.

Hart—Mayhap he is all this, and mayhap he is not. Any way, he is a cursed Tory, and he shall never have my lass.

Polly—Oh, father!

Mrs. R.—I ne'er thought it of thee, John. That thou shouldst wreck thy child's happiness because of thy prejudice.

Hart.—Prate not to me of her happiness with this insolent put, from God knows where When she's wed to an honest patriot lad, then thou canst talk of her happiness.

Mrs. R.—Thou wouldst always have thy way, but mark me: If thou dost interfere 'twill bring thee grief and dolour (rising). I bid thee good night. (Exit Mrs. R. at right.)

Hart.—Give up this madness, my lass. There is Bob Fletcher, a likely lad, who is well nigh sick for love of thee. Thou hast known him since thou wast in pinafores. He bade me ask if he could come and see thee.

Polly—Dear old Bob! He seems like a brother. I do not love him, father, and 'twould be wrong to let him come.

Hart.—Oh, my lass, that thou shouldst love an enemy to thy country! Thou surely canst not love him, and be a good, loyal lass. God knows our country needs all her friends in this dark hour.

Polly—Is't so very dark? Stay! (Polly paces up and down thinking deeply, then stops before her father) Father, I will show thee that I am a loyal maid, and that I can help my country, though it nearly breaks my heart I have information that Capt. Willoughby is to lead an expedition tomorrow night, to surprise the Americans at West Point.

Hart.—Odds my life! This is news, indeed! Art sure thou speakest truly?

Polly—Capt. Willoughby did not tell me, or I could not have betrayed his confidence.

Hart.—Right thou art. Even I would not have thee do that. But bubble it to me quickly. How didst thou hear of it?

Polly—Tibbie overheard Capt. Blaisdell tell Lieut. West, and tomorrow night is the time.

Hart.—Body o' me! This is important news, and I must be off at once. I 'faith methinks there'll be a surprise party surprised.

Polly—Oh, father, dear! I pray that Capt. Willoughby may be spared.

Hart.—God only knows, child. Thou art my loyal lass. (Is about to embrace Polly when Tibbie rushes in from right.)

Tibbie—Hide your father somewhere. There are horsemen coming, and I fear they are British.

Biddy—(enters in great excitement) Miss Polly! Miss Polly the Britishers! That blatherin' Blaisdell and another mon is outside. What iver can we do wid yer father? I know, I do. Come wid me, Miss Tibbie. (Exit Biddy and Tibbie.)

Polly—(wringing hands) Oh, father, father! Thou'lt be captivated What shall we do?

Hart.—Gadsbodikins! Trapped! (Enter Biddy and Tibbie, from right. with some clothes.)

Biddy—Misther Hartwell, sure an' ye'll have to put on these clothes o' mine, and I'll be afther lettin' ye out the back way. We'll fool the varmints, for they'll be thinkin' it's meself. (Knock is heard, which grows louder, as Hartwell gets into a skirt, a long cloak and bonnet.)

Polly—(who tries to help, but is all in a tremble) Hurry, hurry, father!

Tibbie—I'll go to the door and keep them as long as I can. (Exit Tibbie.)

Voice outside—Open, in the King's name. (Exit Biddy at right.)

Tibbie—Who comes at this time o' night, and what dost thou want?

Voice—Let us in. We are hunting a spy.

Tibbie—Thou art welcome to all the spies thou canst find here. Wait till I open the door. It seems to be caught.

Voice—Be mighty quick about it, Miss, or we'll open it for thee.

Blais.—Be quick, Miss Tabitha, but don't be frightened. I'll see that no harm comes to thee. (Tab. opens door and admits Blaisdell and another British soldier. They enter just as Hartwell disappears in Biddy's clothes)

Soldier—(leering at Tabitha) Ho, my lass, thy neat waist, and rosy lips doth invite a man. (Tabitha shrinks away in horror.)

Blais.—Hold! To thy duty, man. (soldier salutes quickly) We have sterner work, than silly clack with maids. (to Polly) Have no fear, Miss Polly. This fellow will have it, that he saw a spy we're hunting enter here.

Soldier—See one, I did, and we'll find him, too.

Polly—There is no spy here. My aunt, the owner of this house, is a loyal tory. But you may search the house if you will. (They look all around the room and exit at right for further search.)

Polly—(goes close to Tibbie, center front) Oh, Tibbie, Tibbie, do you suppose—

Tibbie—(puts arm about Polly, but claps hand over her mouth) Sh! Even walls have ears.

Polly—But I'm so affrighted.

Tibbie—I know, but thou must be brave, dear. (Sound of men returning. Girls separate and assume indifferent attitudes. Men enter, followed by Mrs. R., holding a lighted candle above her head, who, in her haste, has forgotten to remove her night cap.)

Mrs R.—What meaneth this outrage? Breaking into the home of a loyal tory, at this time o' night. I'll report this to Sir Henry.

Blais.—We crave thy pardon, Mistress Risedorf. Jack declared that a spy entered your house. A soldier's duty oft times maketh him an unwelcome guest. (to soldier) Our quest is over. Good night, ladies. Forward! (Soldier salutes. Blaisdell leads, and they go off in military order.)

Polly—Thank God, my father is safe. By this time he is far on his way.

(CURTAIN)

(Curtain rises in two minutes.)

Scene 4—One Week Later.

(Mrs. Risedorf and Tibbie seated in parlor at work, center front.)

Polly—(enters from right and throws herself on her knees at aunt's side) Aunt Katherine, I have something I must tell thee. I will go wild if I do not unburden myself.

Mrs. R.—(putting hand on Polly's head) Why, child! What can it be? I have noticed thy unrest, but gave it no heed, as I did but think it anxiety for both thy father and thy lover.

Polly—(much agitated) Oh, aunt, I fear me I will go distraught! I would there were no such thing as duty

Mrs. R.—Hoity, toity, child! What meanest thou?

Polly—How can I tell thee? Yet I must or I will go daft. The night father was here, I told him that Capt. Willoughby was to surprise the Americans.

Mrs. R.—(drawing away) Polly Hartwell! Thou wicked lass! Thou art mad in sooth.

Polly—(rising) Nay, aunt, I did but do my duty to my country. I had to tell thee, because it was under thy roof that the information was given. If thou so desirest, I will go back to my home.

Mrs. R.—'Twould be thy just deserts, to send thee off. Betraying thy lover, and the British army! No doubt thou hast lost thy lover. What think thee he will say, when he learns that thou art a traitor?

Polly—Don't, don't, Aunt Katherine! Dost not think I counted the cost? I had to be true to my country. (Buries her face in her hands and sinks into chair at right front.) (Enter Biddy from right.)

Mrs. R.—What is it, Biddy?

Biddy—Sure, mistress, it's meself as has bad news for ye.

Mrs. R.—Bad news, Biddy! What hast thou heard?

Biddy—Sure, ma'am, Larry has sint me word that Capt. Willoughby has been took prisoner, he has.

Polly—(rising quickly) Oh-o! Dost know where he was taken, Biddy?

Biddy—Sure, an' he's been taken to Gineral Washington, at Morristown.

Mrs. R.—Canst tell us any more, Biddy?

Biddy—No, Misthress, that was all the word Larry sent.

Mrs. R.—Thou canst thank Larry for sending us the information. (exit Biddy). Well! Thou hast a proper payout, my lass. I hope thou art satisfied. Thou hast played false to thy lover, and put him in prison besides.

Polly—(starting to leave the room) I must write to my father at once.

Mrs. R.—Prithee, what good will that do?

Polly—I will ask him to intercede with General Washington, and have Capt. Willoughby exchanged. (Exit Polly to right.)

Tibbie—How sad it all is. I will be monstrous glad if Polly's father can get an exchange of prisoners.

Mrs. R.—'Tis a question if he can, even if he wills to do it.

Tabitha—Wilt lend me a needle, Mistress Risedorf? My housewife is above stairs. One likes not the thought of work, when in such suspense, but sewing will help pass the time.

Mrs. R.—Well sayst thou: 'tis a time of suspense. And to think that it was so needless.

Tib.—(trying to change the subject) I have a sweet new stitch for my sampler, that Cicely Van Ness brought from New York.

Mrs. R.—The forestring of my calash is broken, but I have no heart to fix it.

Tab.—I will fix it for thee. (enter Polly, left back) Thou art back quickly.

Mrs. R.—Didst get the letter sent?

Polly—Yes, aunt. I sewed it in the coat of my little Quaker lad, and he will give it to the messenger outside the city, who will bear it to the camp at Morristown. (Seats herself right front.)

Tab.—I will fix thy calash now, Mistress Risedorf. (Exit Mrs. R. and Tibbie.)

Biddy—(putting head in door at right) And are ye alone, Miss Polly?

Polly—Yea, Biddy (rises eagerly). Hast heard any thing further?

Biddy—Larry it outside and would shpake wid ye.

Polly—Bring him right in, Biddy (exit Biddy). (enter Larry from right.)

Polly—What news hast thou, Larry?

Larry—(center front) Sure, Miss, 'tis about that blackguard, Capt. Blaisdell. I heard him talkin' to his Honor, Capt. Willoughby. Soon after they was took by the rebels. When I heard Blaisdell mention your name, I made bould to listen, an' sure if that Blaisdell didn't tell his honor, as how you had been the one to betray him into the hands of the blue coats—liar that he is—and then he said as how you'd never loved the Captain at all, at all; that you were naught but a rebel, and was

only l'adin' him on to help the cause of the rebels. I thought you ought to know how Blaisdell was tryin' to traduce ye, the spalpeen!

Polly—Thou didst right to tell me of this. I appreciate your loyal, kind heart, Larry, and I thank thee.

Larry—It's intirely welcome ye are, and if I'm hearin' any more, I'll be afther tellin' ye.

Polly—Thou art kind indeed. I'll depend on thee (exit Larry at right). Was ever maid so bestead?

Biddy—(from without) Sure an' Miss Polly'll not be afther seein' ye. (Polly goes to door, and Capt. Blaisdell comes in.)

Polly—Thou! Why, art thou not a prisoner?

Blais.—I managed to escape. The fates were kind. I have something important to say to thee.

Polly—Biddy is right. I do not care to see thee. Thou canst have nothing to say, that I will care to hear.

Blais.—I have news of thy father, and thou'llt be sorry if thou dost not listen to me.

Polly—(goes to left front) Well, say what thou hast to say, quickly, then.

Blais.—(goes to center front) I know how ye betrayed the British, and ye'll be arrested and taken before Sir Henry Clinton, unless ye marry me. As my wife, I could save thee. Polly, I love thee madly. I will be thy slave. Only say the word.

Polly—(coldly) This has naught to do with my father.

Blais.—I am coming to that. Only be patient, and hear me out. Canst picture what it will mean to thee to be arrested, and tried as a traitor? I would save thee from all this.

Polly—I am ready to face whatever comes, and I will not have thee to thank for my deliverance, though I doubtless will have thee to thank, if such evil befalls me. But I am ready to suffer for my country, and will bear myself as becometh a loyal maid. Our interview is at an end. Thou mayst go.

Blais—Oh, Miss Polly, hear me. I have not told thee yet, about thy father.

Polly—Well, tell it quickly.

Blais —Canst not give me a kind word, when I saved thy father from being arrested?

Polly—Prithee, when didst thou do so much?

Blais.—Ho, ho, Miss Innocence! The night we came searching for a spy, thou didst have him concealed here. I took Jack off the scent, for thy sake, but thou canst not cozen me.

Polly—My father was not concealed here. I gave thee the privilege of searching the house. If that is all, I will bid thee adieu.

Blais.—It is not all. I am not through with thee yet, my pretty. Mayhap thou wouldst enjoy seeing thy father hung as a spy. I can give thee that pleasure, for I have the proper information. Thou knowst the price of my silence. Just say that thou wilt be my wife.

Polly—Never! Belike thy information is as false as that of my father being concealed in this house. But if it is true, deliverance will come some other way. (pointing to door) Now—go.

Blais.—Thou needst not take on such airs. Thy lover has flouted thee, thou wilt be tried as a traitor, and thy father hung as a spy. But I would have one kiss before I go.

Polly—(as Blaisdell steps towards her, with arms extended) Stop where thou art. Thou darest not come nearer. God is here. (Blaisdell drops arms and turns to go, as Capt Willoughby enters. When Blaisdell sees Willoughby he gives a start.)

Capt. W.—Blaisdell! What art thou doing here? (Blaisdell slinks away.)

Polly—(who sinks in chair, at left front, when she sees Willoughby) Capt. Willoughby! How camest thou here?

Capt. W.—I am but just released, and came right to thee.

Polly—(rising and extending hands) Canst thou ever forgive me? My heart is breaking.

Capt. W.—I have been in torment, for I thought thee false to me, but I had a ray of hope when I found it was through thy good offices that I was released.

Polly—It was as if a sword pierced my own heart when to my father I spake the fatal words. My heart was not false, but was true to my country and to thee. I did not love thee less, but even more did my heart yearn for thee.

Capt. W.—I see it all! There was naught else for thee to do, my loyal maid, my own true love! (He clasps her in his arms.)

(CURTAIN)

Scene 5—From Audience.

Mr. Bassett—That was our Marilly Maud!

Mrs. B.—Wasn't it grand? I never thought of anything like this.

Mr. B.—Come on, Ma, let's go find her. (Both go behind scenes.)

(Curtain rises as Mr. and Mrs. B. leave audience)

Tibbie—(throwing arms around Polly, giving her a bear hug) I knew you could do it! I told you so!

Biddy—(as others gather round Polly, center front) You were just great, Polly.

Capt. W.—You're a wonder! It was mighty easy to be your lover.

Blais.—Yes, and mighty hard to be the heavy villain.

Miss Holmes—(who goes to Marilla and throws arm around her) I am proud of you, my dear. You have covered yourself with glory. (turning to others) I am proud of every one of you.

(Meanwhile Willoughby has discovered Mr. and Mrs. Bassett in the background, and engages in conversation with them. He brings them to Marilla.)

Marilla—(rushing towards them) Mother! Father!

(CURTAIN)

ACT III.

Three Years Later

A plain, ordinary farmhouse living room, with table in center, a chair on either side of table—one a low rocker, and the other an arm-chair. Two or three other chairs arranged around room. If convenient, a writing desk, or whatever furniture is practicable.

Mrs. Bassett is dressed in her "second best" dress. Marilla Maud in first scene wears a stylish hat and traveling suit, which, without coat, may be worn during second scene, as there is no time for changing, as curtain is down only two or three minutes between scenes.

Street door is at center back, window, left back, side entrance at right. When curtain rises, Mrs. Bassett is seated on low rocker at left front, near table, with folded hands, but expectant. Mr. Bassett at right front in arm chair, reading paper. Mrs. Bassett, who has been ill, wears a little shawl on shoulders. Every little while Mrs. B. cranes neck and looks out of window.

Scene One.

Mrs. B.—I wonder if Mandy swept the kitchen. We want things to look spruce when Marilly Maud comes.

Mr. B.—Yes, Ma, she sure did. She don't always mow into the corners, but she did this time. She's slickin' up for company.

Mrs. B.—She's that shiftless! She sweeps like she was afraid of hurtin' the floor.

Mr. B.—Well, she hustled around this mornin' all right. She made dust and noise enough for a thrashin' outfit.

Mrs. B.—It's a wonder. She's mortal slow.

Mr. B.—One thing! There's no danger o' lightnin' strikin' her. It'd go clean past her every time.

Mrs. B.—'Taint so much of a joke. It worries me so, that I can't get out there to see to things.

Mr. B.—There, there, Ma, don't you get skittish and fractious. Mandy's done her chores all up neat as a pin.

Mrs. B.—Ain't it most time for Marilly Maud and Jim to be here?

Mr. B.—You must give them time. They ain't comin' in no flyin' machine.

Mrs. B.—(noise outside) Hark! That's them comin' now.

Mr. B.—(goes to window) No, that's Bud Watkins goin' by. But it won't be long now. By the way, Ma, we mustn't let Marilly Maud know a thing about how things has been goin'. It's mighty hard, but we won't bother her with it. Do you think you can keep the cat in the bag, Ma, or are you like all the women folks?

Mrs. B.—I 'low I can. I won't tell her a mite about it.

Mr. B.—(sound is heard outside again. Mrs. B. makes several efforts to rise, and finally succeeds) Here she comes! (he strides to door, center back, and greets Marilly Maud, putting his arm around her as he takes her to her mother) Here's your girl, Ma.

Marilly M.—Why mother! What's the meaning of this? (Mrs. B. succeeds in rising) Are you ill? (Throws arms around her and kisses her.)

Mr. B.—(back of table) Oh, your ma ain't been feelin' real peart for the last few months. She's been playin' off, but she'll be as spy as a cricket, now you're home

Marilly M.—And you never wrote me a word!

Mrs. G.—I wouldn't let pa tell you. I didn't want you to be worried. I'm better now. This is one of my poorly days.

Marilly M.—You should have told me. It was all wrong to keep me in ignorance.

Mr. B —You ain't goin' to blame us, are you?

Mrs. B.—We didn't want to hinder your career.

M.—My career, indeed! What did that matter, if you were ill?

Mrs. B.—There, there, daughter, don't mind about it. I ain't been real sick; just kind o' pindlin' and no account. Let's have a good time while you're here. Tell us all about every thing.

M.—Where shall I begin? (takes off hat, jacket and gloves and throws them on table). Why, where's Jim? There, I let him go without even saying "thank you".

Mr. B.—He'll be in soon again. He runs in two or three times every day. He's been like a son to us.

M —How good he is! By the way, why didn't you celebrate my home coming by sending for me in the new auto?

Mr. B —(hemming and hawing, clearing throat, in confusion) Why—we ain't got it out from town yet.

M.—Well, why not? I sent the money for it, more than two months ago. (looking around). And mother, you are sitting in your little old rocking chair. Where are the easy chairs I told you to get for ycurself and father? And how about the churn and the separator, did you get good ones?

Mr. B.—We decided to make the old ones do awhile longer.

M.—But how can you? Why, that separator was worn out and ready to throw away when I left home. I don't understand. What have you done with the money?

Mr. B.—You're bound to drive the nigger out of the wood pile, ain't you, Marilly Maud?

M.—Certainly, if there's one there. Father, tell me. Don't keep me in suspense.

Mr. B.—I hate like p'ison to do it, after keepin' it this long. But you see—well—you know, Caleb Sparks and me have always helped each other out when we got in tight places, so I went on his note. He has

had such bad luck, and lost every thing, so I had to pay it.

M.—But how could you pay it?

Mr. B.—Hm! Why—well we had to mortgage the farm.

M.—Oh, father!

Mr. B.—Yes, daughter, there was no other way, so every bit of money you sent had to be used in that way.

M.—But why did you keep it from me? Don't you know that I could have saved you every bit of this worry. Well, we'll go to town tomorrow, and pay off that mortgage. It is too dreadful to think of what you have gone through, when just a word from me would have saved it all. No wonder you are sick, Mother.

Mrs. B.—We thought you had enough to do, payin' for Billy's schoolin'.

M.—(stooping to kiss her mother) But you have no idea what your daughter has been doing. I should have told you more, but wanted to give you a happy surprise. But never mind, it's all over now. (goes to father and looks at his face critically) We'll soon have those care lines smoothed out.

Mr. B.—I'm so happy a'ready, I feel like whistlin', and I thought I'd clean forgot how. My mouth ain't had any more pucker in it lately than a two-foot rule.

Mrs. B.—(giving a sigh of content) I'm happy, too, but (pointing her finger at Mr. B.) it was you who let the cat out, all right.

(CURTAIN)

(Curtain rises in two minutes)

Scene 2—A Month Later.

(Marilla Maud seated sewing, at right of table. Enter Mr. B. from center back, with Capt. Willoughby, whose real name is Herbert Keene)

Mr. B.—Here's a city chap to see you, Marilly Maud.

M.—(rising) Why, Captain Willoughby! How camest thou here?

Keene—I thought to give thee a surprise. (They shake hands.)

M.—Father, this is Mr. Keene. You remember he took the part of Captain Willoughby in the play we gave, the time you and mother came to Boston.

Mr. B.—(shaking hands) So you was one o' them beruffled, befrilled fellers, was you? No wonder I didn't recognize you. Seems like you've had a hair cut sence then. (All laugh.)

M.—There is quite a transformation.

Mr. B.—But, Marilly Maud, he ain't much of a farmer. When he come to the barn, where we was puttin' up hay, he asked how many bushels to the acre the alfalfy was yieldin'. (Laughs heartily.)

Keene—I think we're about even. You took me for an agent. Didn't know whether my line was lightning rods or automobiles.

Mr. B.—That's right. But you'll have to excuse me, for I cal-late a farmer can't do much settin' 'round in hayin' time. He might lose a bushel or two of that alfalfy (all laugh). But you're right welcome, so set down and make yourself at home. (Exit Mr. B. at right.)

M.—(Marilla resumes seat) Father does enjoy a joke. But tell me the news.

Keene—(going to her side) The news can wait. You know why I have come Marilla. I take it as a good omen, that you greeted me with the words of the play. Can't you be as you were in the play? Can't you make the play come true?

M.—Oh, Mr. Keene! I'm sorry. I like you so much, but I can't care for you in that way.

Keene—Is it because there is some one else?

M.—No, there is no one.

Keene—Then I will not despair. (Enter Jim Bigelow with mail. When he sees Keene, he stops short.)

M.—(looks around) Come right in, Jim (Jim advances). This is Mr Keene, of Boston. Mr. Bigelow, Mr Keene. (Men shake hands.)

Jim—Here is the mail, Marilla. (Puts it on table and turns to go.)

M.—Don't be in a hurry, Jim. Can't you stay awhile?

Jim—Thank you, but I haven't time to stop now. I will be in later. (Exit Jim at right.)

Keene—By Jove! I fear I see a rival there.

M.—Jim Bigelow! Why I've known him all my life. He's like a brother.

Keene—Forgive me, Marilla. I must be going now, but I will not give you up. I'll see you in town soon, won't I?

M.—I can't tell when I will go. But won't you stay and see mother?

Keene—Thank you, no, not now. I fear I'd not be good company.

M.—You'll be happy yet. Good bye (exit Keene, center back). Oh, dear! Why do girls have such perplexing problems? (M. sees mail, finds letter, which she looks over, and reads on outside, standing back of table). The Longworth Bureau, New York (she turns it over, scanning it). What in the world does it mean? (opens letter, reads, then jumps up, dances around excitedly) Hurrah! Perfectly splendid! Beyond my wildest dreams! (stops short) But no! (sighing deeply, as she sinks into chair at left front) Mother needs me. My place is here.

(Enter Mrs. B., from right, who is still feeble. M. tries to hide letter.)

Mrs. B.—What have you there, daughter?

M.—Oh, nothing much—just a letter.

Mrs. B.—A letter! Who's it from?

M.—No one you know, Mother.

Mrs. B.—(insistently) But, Marilly Maud, who is it from?

M.—From the Longworth Bureau.

Mrs. B—What's that? Do they want to buy the farm?

M.—Not exactly. They want to buy your daughter's services.

Mrs. B.—They do! How much'll they give you? Is it good pay?

M.—Not good enough to get me away from home **now,** Mother. I'm going to stay with you. We'll have the cosiest, homiest time you ever heard of.

Mrs. B—Now, Marilly Maud, you ain't goin' to do no such thing—the idea! After all your schoolin'!

M—But I am. You're not going to **drive** me away from home, are you? Don't you want me to stay, Mother?

(Mrs. B. sinks into a chair at right front and begins to cry.)

M.—Why, Mother! (runs and kneels beside her.)

Mrs. B.—(between sobs) I'm—just—so happy—I can't help it.

M—There, there, Mother! (smooths her hair and kisses her, as she rises). (to change subject) Here's your Farmer's Wife. Jim brought it a short time ago. (Mrs. B. takes off glasses, wipes them on her apron, then takes up paper.)

Mrs. B.—I wonder what's the matter with Jim? He don't come in nigh so much as he used to. He just brings the mail and goes right off. He's been **so** good to us.

M—I've driven him away, it seems.

Mrs. B.—(as M. crosses room with back to mother) No, Marilly Maud. I wouldn't say **that.** I used to think he was in love with you, but Sary Watkins says he's goin' to be married.

M.—(wheeling round suddenly) What! Jim Bigelow going to be married! Why Mother, I don't believe it.

Mrs. B.—Yes sir! Sary says he has a girl at Grafton, where he went to school. She says he goes over there to see her frequent, and they'll be married soon. You know, he's bought the eighty joinin' our farm, and has it all paid for.

M.—Well, Jim **deserves** all his good fortune.

Mrs. B.—Your father and me always hoped **you** and Jim would make up to each other, but I s'pose you'll marry that city feller.

M.—Not I, Mother. I'm going to stay right here with you.

Mrs. B.—And be an old maid'? Marilly, Maud Bassett, don't you never do no such thing!

M—(laughing) That would be a disaster.

Mrs. B.—(as Mr. B. enters from right) What do you think, Pa? — Marilly Maud ain't goin' back to Boston no more. She's goin' to stay home with us.

Mr. B.—(goes back of table to M.'s side) What's that? Not goin' back to Boston? You ain't sick, are you?

M.—(stretching herself to full height) Do I look as if I were sick? No, indeed! I'm going to stay home and take care of you and mother.

Mr. B.—(as he pats her on shoulder) Well, well, Marilly Maud, you're a good daughter. I'm so relieved (blows nose violently, turns on heel). But it's feedin' time. (Bolts out of room.)

M.—Feeding time at four o'clock! Dear old dad! (Wipes her eyes.)

Mrs. B.—I'm mighty glad to have you home, but it don't seem right for you to give up your career, and the city feller, and Jim, and all.

M.—Haven't you got the cart before the horse, Mother? It seems that Jim's given me up.

Mrs. B.—We all know he wanted you bad enough, but you never give him a mite o' hope. Well, I must go get them prunes stewin' (Exit Mrs. B. at right.)

M.—Marilla Maud Bassett, you're just waking up to what Jim Bigelow means to you—and you've lost him. Can I stay here and see him day after day? (sighing) It will be hard, but I have put my hand to the plow, and I will not look back. (Enter Jim B., from right.) M. goes to meet him. They meet in front of table.)

M.—What is this I hear about you, Jim?

Jim—I don't know what you may have heard, but I have come to say good bye. I am going away for awhile.

M.—I know, and I hope you will be very happy, Jim.

Jim—(looking puzzled) I don't expect to be particularly happy, but I will be busy.

M.—Not happy! Why, I supposed every bridegroom was happy.

Jim—Bridegroom!

M.—Yes Aren't you going away to be married?

Jim—Well, if I am, it's news to me.

M.—Mother told me that she heard you were to be married soon.

Jim—Have you heard that foolish gossip? There's no truth in it. There's only one girl in the world for me, and I can't stay here and see—well, I can't stay here and see you married to Keene.

M.—If that's the reason you're going, you might as well stay.

Jim—You mean, you're not going to marry Keene?

M.—Something like that, Jim. I am going to stay home and take care of mother and father.

Jim—(face brightening) You are? Marilla Maud, may I not share in the work? Can you not learn to care for me a little?

M.—No, Jim, I cannot care for you a little, because—I care for you a great deal. (As Jim puts arms around M. curtain falls.)

(CURTAIN)

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A drama of one or two acts, whichever may be desired; One scene, the office of a country hotel; employing about fifty people

THE GAYRUSANS' LEGACY

A Three-Act Drama Setting Forth the Sayings and Doings of the Gayrusan Family and Their Friends, and Employing About Twenty-four People

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